

**Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
FY 2011 National Justice Information Sharing (JIS) Initiative
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Program Information

1. What are the purposes of the program?

BJA seeks to enhance the ability of justice agencies to share information in order to support critical public safety and criminal justice activities. BJA plans to address this nationwide need by developing and implementing national policy and best practices, creating national consensus standards in support of information sharing and interoperability, and delivering training and technical assistance services. Through this solicitation's six categories, BJA is seeking to enable the nation's criminal justice community to improve information sharing through advanced technology and tools that increase efficiency, enhance operations, and promote cost savings and reuse. BJA's JIS Initiative works collaboratively with key stakeholders and national partner organizations to identify critical issues and problems, and provide resources in response to emerging challenges in law enforcement, courts, corrections, reentry, human/social services, and tribal justice.

Eligibility

2. Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants are limited to national, regional, state, or local public and private entities, including for-profit (commercial) and nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit or for-profit organizations), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), federally-recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, and units of local government that support initiatives to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system.

Please see the "Eligibility" section of the solicitation.

3. Are there other key considerations that applicants should be aware of that may impact their eligibility and the quality of their applications?

Yes. There are three key considerations:

- First, in order to be eligible, applicants must submit proposals that describe projects that are national in scope. For the purpose of this solicitation, "national in scope" is defined as projects whose direct beneficiaries include criminal justice agencies and organizations throughout the country, their personnel, and the citizens they serve, without restriction to geographic areas. For example, a proposal to develop a technology training program that is available to students on a nationwide basis meets the definition; a training program that is limited to one agency or unit of government does not meet the definition. In the case of technology implementation projects, national in scope may include projects that implement solutions on a local, state, or regional basis, provided they employ innovative, non-traditional solutions that can be replicated nationwide. This more inclusive definition may be used for categories 1, 2, 4, and 5 in this solicitation.
- Second, each proposed project should contribute to DOJ's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) and BJA's justice information sharing strategies, goals, and plans. (For more information about Global, please visit: <http://www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=globalJustice>.)
- Third, successful applicants must demonstrate effective procedures for collaboration and coordination among stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels, and understand the relationships between the proposed activities and other complementary initiatives across the country. Applicants must be willing and able to participate in, and contribute to, the national dialogue regarding effective strategies for the use of information sharing and technology to improve criminal justice outcomes.

4. Can an application include more than one organization?

Yes. However, the organizations included must meet the eligibility criteria defined in the solicitation. In addition, there must be a designated lead applicant that is responsible for the submission of the application through Grants.gov, and there should be clear documentation of commitment from the other participating agencies.

5. Can the same agency/organization apply for funding under more than one category?

Yes. However, the agency/organization must submit a separate application for funding under each category.

How Organizations Will Apply

6. What method or mechanism will applicants use to apply for funding?

Applications will be submitted through Grants.gov. Grants.gov is a “one-stop storefront” that provides a unified process for all customers of federal awards to find funding opportunities and apply for funding. Complete instructions on how to register and submit an application can be found at www.Grants.gov. If the applicant experiences technical difficulties at any point during this process, please call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800–518–4726**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take up to several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation and a user password. OJP highly recommends that applicants start the registration process as early as possible to prevent delays in submitting an application package by the specified application deadline.

See the “How to Apply” section for more information.

7. I am experiencing problems with Grants.gov. Who can help me to address these problems and answer my questions?

Contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800–518–4726**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

In addition, notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding web page, www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/solicitations.htm.

8. Can I submit a paper version via U.S. mail instead of an electronic application through Grants.gov?

No. All applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov. Paper submissions will not be accepted.

Required Application Elements

9. What does the 15 page limit for applications under each of the solicitation six categories include?

The 15 page limit restricts only the size of the Program Narrative, and not the other required and recommended application elements.

See the “What an Application Should Include” section for more information.

10. Can multiple files be submitted as a part of my application?

Yes, OJP strongly recommends the use of appropriately descriptive file names when multiple files are submitted, including, for example, applicant name, solicitation name and category, and attachment title. The “Additional Attachments” listed under the “What an Application Should Include” section can be submitted as multiple files.

11. How should our budget be presented?

As outlined in the “What an Application Should Include” section, a budget detail worksheet and a budget narrative are required to be submitted. Please see this section for descriptions of each. The section also includes a link to a sample budget detail worksheet: www.ojp.gov/funding/forms/budget_detail.pdf.

Budgets should also reflect the total amount of federal funding requested for the entire project period (18 months).

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, please see the OJP Financial Guide at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm.

12. Do the anticipated award amounts in each category cover the entire 18-month grant period?

Yes, each award amount is for the entire grant period.

13. What are the responsibilities and deliverables associated with each of the six categories and where can I go to get more information about the work associated each?

Category 1

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Planning and implementing a project that supports cross-jurisdiction or cross-domain information sharing with potential for replication nationwide
- Employing recognized and emerging promising practices and Global-supported information sharing policies, practices, and technology solutions to enable regional, statewide, multi-state, or national data exchange
- Developing a BJA-branded report that documents the development and implementation process for the project, as well as appropriate project performance measures, to support national adoption of promising practices

(For more information about Global, visit: www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=globalJustice.)

Category 2

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Delivering requirements and one or more Global Justice Reference Architecture (JRA)-conformant Service Specification Packages for distributed or federated query services that support an all-crimes approach (For more information about JRA, visit: www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=nationalInitiatives&page=1015.)
- Creating a live, working model of at least one distributed or federated query capability and service that utilizes DOJ's Global tools and recognized national standards, to include the Global Federated Identify and Privilege Management (GFIPM) framework (For more information about GFIPM, visit: www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=nationalInitiatives&page=1179.)
- Developing a BJA-branded project report that documents the outcomes of the development and testing of one or more distributed or federated query capabilities

Category 3

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Operating the Services Task Team (STT) as described above and consistent with current operating practices
- Managing and maintaining the JRA Services Registry, including support for a distributed or federated registry capability to link with other service registries and resources
- Executing services governance activities as defined by BJA and DOJ's Global, in order to facilitate consistent, standards-based adoption of the JRA across justice, public safety, and other communities
- Documenting STT activities, decisions, and resolutions
- Serving as a knowledgebase of service specifications and their use across the country
- Modifying the JRA Services Registry as necessary to implement and support hosting and discovery across a federation of independent service registries

(For more information about JRA, visit: www.it.ojp.gov/default.aspx?area=nationalInitiatives&page=1015.)

Category 4

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Planning and implementing a program that can be replicated nationwide, addresses statutory issues, and enables the designated fusion center to receive and share gun tracing information. (The program must include a technical solution that supports state and local agencies in sharing crime gun data in an efficient, sustainable way.)
- Undertaking an education and awareness program for law enforcement regarding crime gun data in preventing and responding to gun crimes
- Creating a BJA-branded project report that documents the development and implementation process for sharing gun tracing information and a high level strategy for national implementation

(For more information about e-trace, a web-based tool to enable the secure exchange of data on the origin and use of firearms and gun crime incidents that is operated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) National Tracing Center Division, visit:

<http://www.atf.gov/publications/factsheets/factsheet-national-tracing-center.html>)

Category 5

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Developing and executing practical solutions that improve electronic communication, including Suspicious Activity Reporting, between fusion centers and law enforcement agencies
- Participating in working groups that identify priority needs of the field with respect to sharing real-time data, and focus on project activities on supporting progress toward addressing these needs
- Illustrating through pilot project design and implementation that activities are accomplishing Minimum Baseline Capabilities as recommended by DOJ's Global. (For more information about these capabilities, visit: www.it.ojp.gov/documents/baselinecapabilities.pdf.)

Category 6

Responsibilities and deliverables, at a minimum, include:

- Providing multi-agency coordination to ensure cost-effective planning, stakeholder satisfaction, and achievement of training goals
 - Work with BJA, DHS, FBI, and other partners like the CICC to define a plan for each event that articulates clear roles and responsibilities
 - Coordinate activities with sponsoring organizations and designated working groups
 - Resolve issues and risks successfully with guidance from BJA and DHS
 - Host and facilitate regular planning, progress, and issue meetings
- Working with sponsoring organizations and key stakeholders to identify training deliverables and facilitate development of agendas that cover priority topics using respected and knowledgeable faculty
 - Identify and design approaches, goals, objectives, and topics
 - Coordinate program content and speaker attendance
 - Produce agendas, programs, and other support materials
 - Perform outreach activities to targeted participants
 - Provide onsite facilitation, management, and follow-up
 - Oversee evaluations to inform future events supported under this initiative
- Managing and executing full event lifecycle activities and related tasks to ensure safe, well-managed, and well-received events
 - Direct pre-planning and related tasks for all meetings
 - Coordinate all onsite activities and post-event follow up responsibilities

- Facilitating development and implementation of national policy, practices, and technology solutions that support fusion center excellence
 - Deliver high quality training and technical assistance that promote enhancements in fusion center operations
 - Develop written products that synthesize key lessons learned in the delivery of training and technical assistance for use in jurisdictions across the nation

For more information about the 2011 National Fusion Center Conference, visit:

www.iir.com/registration/fusioncenter.

14. When is the funding start date?

A funding start date has not been included in the solicitation. It is anticipated that the start date for project under each category will be in the latter part of 2011, pending final award approval. For the purposes of applying, BJA recommends that applicants specify a project start date no earlier than October 1, 2011.

15. Are the additional requirements described in the “Additional Requirements” section required to be submitted with my application, or at time of the award, if funded?

In the application process in Grants.gov, applicants will be required to acknowledge and agree to uphold these requirements. However, no paperwork will need to be completed unless an award is made.

16. Is there an example of a successful application that I can use to guide my effort to respond to this solicitation?

Yes, examples of successful FY 2010 applications can be found at:

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/funding/Example_Applications_2010.html.

Tracking Applications, and Notifying Successful and Unsuccessful Applicants

17. I am applying—or have applied—for funding under this solicitation. How does the review process work? Is there a way for me to track the status of my application?

The review and award process may take up to 6 months or more. During this time, you may be asked additional questions about your application for clarification purposes.

To ensure that the integrity of the competitive review process is not compromised, BJA cannot discuss details regarding the status of your application until after the review process has been completed, and all applicants have been notified of the outcomes of the process.

See the “Review Process” section for more information.

18. I am applying—or have applied—for funding under this solicitation. How will I be notified if my organization is selected to receive an award – or not selected?

The point of contact and the authorizing official listed in your application will receive an e-mail notification (around the end of this fiscal year) regarding whether or not your application was selected to receive funding. If your application is selected to receive funding, this e-mail notification will provide further information about the procedures for receiving funds.

Performance Measures

19. The solicitation contains a list of performance measures for each of the six categories. Do I need to provide data for these measures as part of the Program Narrative section of my application?

No. Submission of performance measurement data is not required for the application. Instead, applicants should discuss in their application their proposed methods for collecting data for performance measures that are relevant to their project, which will be reported quarterly to BJA.

See the “Selection Criteria” section for more information.